

HISTORIC & CONNECTION

A newsletter of the city of Las Vegas Department of Planning. The Historic Preservation Commission is dedicated to saving the city's legacy and heritage.

Museum Madness In 2012!

by Courtney Mooney, historic preservation officer

This year, with an early kick-off from the Nevada State Museum opening in late October 2011, is turning out to be the year of the museum for Las Vegas. With the added openings of the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement and the soon-to-be-completed visitors center at the Neon Museum, the city is swiftly becoming a world class museum destination. The HPC invites you to join them in celebrating the accomplishments of our beloved local museums during Historic Preservation and Archaeology Awareness Month in May (see page 3). Read below for the latest museum news:

The Nevada State Museum Las Vegas

The new Nevada State Museum opened in 2011 at the Springs Preserve. The \$51.5 million, 70,000 square-foot community facility was completed in 2009, but remained unused for two years as a result of state budget constraints from the 2000 economic slowdown. Designed by local architects Steelman Partners, the museum boasts 13,000 square feet of exhibit space, a research library, education lab, reception area, catering kitchen, meeting rooms and state-of-the-art storage facilities. The museum's exhibits and expansive historic collections enhance the Southern Nevada emphasis of other museums in the complex and expand the research to include the rest of Nevada. Museum programming complements educational and history-themed activities at the Preserve.

Visitors to the Nevada State Museum at the Springs Preserve will pay one fee that allows entry into the preserve as well as the museum. For location, hours and admission fees, please visit www.nevadaculture.org or www.springspreserve.org.

The National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, "The Mob Museum"

The Mob Museum opened on Feb. 14, 2012, the 83rd anniversary of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, in the restored former U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, constructed in 1933 and located in downtown Las Vegas. The historic courtroom hosted the seventh in a series of senate hearings into organized crime, led by Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee in the 1950s. A variety of interactive exhibits, films and high-tech audio visual displays examine the history and impact of organized crime locally and in the United States, including the role of law enforcement in helping to eradicate and control the Mob.

A \$42 million construction project, the Mob Museum was funded



The Nevada State History Museum at the Springs Preserve

by the city of Las Vegas and nearly \$9 million in federal, state and local historic preservation grants. The design team included internationally known design and historic preservation firms renowned for their work on the Smithsonian Museum, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and the International Spy Museum. For more information, please visit www.themobmuseum.org.

Neon Museum

Construction of the visitors center for the Neon Museum is ongoing with expected completion in Summer 2012. The Visitors Center, adjacent to the Neon Boneyard, will be located in the historic La Concha Motel Lobby (1961). This amazing concrete shell-shaped structure, originally located on the Strip, was designed by famed African-American architect Paul Revere Williams. The lobby is listed on the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register. The new state-of-the-art visitors center will include a reception area, event facilities, administrative offices and interactive exhibition capabilities. For more information, please visit www.neonmuseum.org.

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National Atomic Testing Museum

The National Atomic Testing Museum became the 36th museum in the US to receive a "National" designation. In January 2012, President Obama signed the Defense Authorization Act, declaring the museum to be a national treasure. The National Atomic Testing Museum is the only "National" museum in Nevada, and only one of two nuclear museums in the United States. It tells the story of the nuclear weapons testing program at the Nevada Test Site and the hundreds of men and women who worked

there, and those who are still working at the Nevada National Security Site.

In addition to the permanent displays that make up the core exhibit area of the museum, a temporary exhibit gallery features traveling exhibits and short-term themed exhibits related to science, engineering and technology. For more information, please visit www.atomictestingmuseum.org.

Las Vegas Natural History Museum

The Las Vegas Natural History Museum is looking to double the size of the current facility and open a fossil lab that could attract dinosaur researchers from all

over. Currently museum administrators are eyeing the space now occupied by the Lied Discovery Children's Museum, which is set to move into the new Smith Center later this year. The Lied space offers higher ceilings for T-Rex and other dinosaurs, and an additional 34,000 square feet. Additionally, the museum is in talks with Drexel University in Philadelphia to bring dinosaur fossils to Las Vegas for study, including a handful of specimens that have been boxed up and waiting to be examined for more than a century. We wish them luck in their future plans! For more information, please visit www.lvnhm.org. HC

HP Update:

Historic Westside School Master Plan And Rehabilitation Project

The Historic Westside School and Variety Early Learning Center Master Plan, prepared by KME Architects for the city of Las Vegas, was completed in December 2011. The Master Plan provides programming and rehabilitation recommendations for the historic Westside School, located at 330 W. Washington Ave. in West Las Vegas. Recommendations for programming are based on several community meetings and workshops held during 2010 and 2011. The Master Plan is available for download at www.lasvegasnevada.gov/historicwestsideschool.

The next phase is to begin construction on the rehabilitation of the historic school. The city of Las Vegas has funding left over from a \$550,000 grant from the Las Vegas Centennial Commission, and will receive \$4 million from the same source as well as \$900,000 from the city's Redevelopment Agency for construction.

The Historic Westside School is listed on the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register, as well as the state and National Register of Historic Places. The city continues to work with the State Historic Preservation Office on guidelines for rehabilitating the historic buildings.

How you can contribute: If you or someone you know attended the school, please contact the Historic Westside School Alumni Foundation at www.westsideschoolalumnifoundation.org/index-1.html to share your stories. The city is also looking for historical photographs of the school for research and future exhibit purposes. Please contact the city via any of the methods below to share your photographs.

For updates on the progress and dates,

times and locations of public meetings, please visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/westsideschool, Facebook at www.facebook.com/HISTORICWESTSIDESCHOOL and Twitter at www.twitter.com/HWSCHOOLLV. You can also e-mail questions to HISTORICWESTSIDESCHOOL@LASVEGASNEVADA.GOV.

2012 Historic Preservation Fund Grants

The city of Las Vegas has applied for \$45,000 in grant funding from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) through the Nevada State Historic Preservation (SHPO), to complete the Phase III: Beverly Green Neighborhood Historic Resource Survey and Inventory. The Phase III survey area is generally bounded by E. St. Louis Avenue, Santa Rosa Drive, E. Sahara Avenue and S. Sixth Street on the north, west, south and east respectively. The survey area includes approximately 141 single- and multi-family homes and commercial buildings generally dating from the early 1950s to the early 1960s. The predominant residential architectural style is modern Ranch.

The HPF originates with the National Park Service and is administered by the SHPO to assist with inventories of historic properties throughout the state. The city of Las Vegas is a Certified Local Government which allows for priority status for HPF grant applications. The city is typically awarded approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 annually to survey historic neighborhoods.

Survey of this area is part of the recommendation by the city of Las Vegas Historic Preservation Commission to develop a Mid-Century Architecture Historic Context Report for WWII and post-WWII development within the city of Las Vegas.

Historic Preservation Commission Centennial Legacy Grant

The deadline for submitting an application for the HPC Centennial Legacy Grant is Aug. 1, 2012. Grants are limited to \$5,000 and are for historic preservation projects within the city of Las Vegas boundaries. Past grant projects include lectures, educational materials and tours of mid-century architecture. For more information, please visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/hp.

City Of Las Vegas Centennial Grant

Grants are for historic preservation projects within the city of Las Vegas boundaries, and are limited to \$100,000. Past grant projects include historic preservation events, lectures, educational materials, statues of historical figures and historic property restoration and rehabilitation. For more information, please contact Esther Carter at (702) 229-6672 or ecarter@lasvegasnevada.gov.

Railroad Cottages Prepping For Final Move

Four historic Railroad Cottages (1909 - 1911) that were moved to the Springs Preserve in 2005 and 2006 are being prepared to be moved to their permanent locations and incorporated into the Preserve's



Historic Railroad Cottage in its temporary location at the Springs Preserve, 2006

educational programming. The Preserve has been working with the National Park Service on a preservation and interpretation plan for the cottages. Partial funding for the final move and rehabilitation has come from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act and

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the Las Vegas Centennial Commission. Pick up the Fall 2012 *Historic Connection* for more updates.

Newest Commissioner And New Appointments

On Nov. 2, 2011, the Las Vegas City Council appointed Donald L. Hotchkiss, Jr., PE, to Category 3 Experienced in Building Construction. On March 28, 2012, the Commission appointed Dorothy Wright as HPC chair to replace former Chair Bob Stoldal, and Bob Stoldal as HPC vice-chair to replace former Vice-Chair Dorothy Wright. Please join the commission in welcoming our newest member and congratulating our new chair and vice-chair.

Documenting The African-American Experience In Las Vegas

As part of a collaborative composed of VegasPBS, Henderson Libraries, Clark County Library District, and the Nevada State Museum, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is applying for a Library Services and Technology Act grant. The funds will be used to conduct a survey and inventory of existing African-American collections currently housed in a variety of locations, including private collections, nonprofit

organizations and government agencies. This project will also create a web portal, hosted and maintained by UNLV, to provide easy and convenient access to these disparate collections through links and other information.

The history of the African-American community in Las Vegas has been told only in small part. It is often anecdotal, focusing on a few prominent individuals, entertainers, business and political leaders who led the long civil rights struggle in Las Vegas. Unlike other aspects of Las Vegas' history which are well documented and often over-represented, the everyday lives of African-Americans in Las Vegas have been ill-served by the traditional historical record. As a consequence, the history of Las Vegas is very incomplete. The project will identify gaps in the historical record by surveying existing and known African-American collections and make the existence and scope of these collections known, whatever their future disposition might ultimately be.

The collections which the project hopes to identify and make accessible include photographs, personal and business papers and records, oral histories, family scrapbooks, the records of neighborhood organizations and newspapers. Additional oral histories narra-

tors will be contacted and interviewed as well. A community advisory committee has been formed to assist in identifying personal and public collections and informing the community about this ambitious effort.

Morelli House

In December 2011 the Nevada State Board of Museums and History voted to support the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office's recommendation for listing of the Morelli House (1959) on the National Register of Historic Places.



Morelli House in downtown Las Vegas

The nomination, submitted by the Junior League of Las Vegas, will be forwarded to the National Register for consideration. Final decision is expected by Fall 2012. The Morelli House is listed on the Nevada State Register of Historic Places and the city of Las Vegas Historic Property Register. For more information on this and other historic locations within the city of Las Vegas, please visit www.lasvegas-nevada.gov/hp. HC

Biography Corner:

Historic Preservation Commissioner Jack LeVine

In the spirit of this year's Historic Preservation and Archaeology Awareness Month theme, "Museum Madness" we highlight a self-professed museum junky, Commissioner Jack LeVine. Commissioner LeVine has served



HPC Commissioner Jack LeVine

in Category 4 — Experienced in Real Estate Profession since March 2011. When he is not spending time traveling and visiting museums, Commissioner LeVine helps to promote Las Vegas' mid-

century modern neighborhoods as a realtor, member of local historic preservation organizations Friends of Classic Las Vegas and Atomic Age Alliance and creator of VeryVintageVegas.com, the local source for vintage real estate listings and vintage architecture blog.

Jack fell in love with Las Vegas as a young man visiting his parents in the 1970s, eventually moving here in 1985. His appreciation for mid-century architecture probably stems from growing up in a post WWII tract house in Columbus, Ohio. His mother refinished and re-upholstered antiques, teaching Jack at a young age the value of "repurposing." But Jack credits his participation in the transportation of one of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses across the United States as part of the Smithsonian Institute's "Usonian Automatic Traveling Exhibit" in 1988 as the genesis for his true appreciation of the more refined modern architectural style.

From the early days as a household mover to his current occupation as a mid-century modern real estate expert, tour guide for mid-century modern architecture tours and now as a preservation commissioner, Commissioner LeVine has devoted his career to architecture and urban living. As a commissioner, Jack champions historic surveys of our WWII and post-WWII neighborhoods and provides the city with valuable historical information about each neighborhood. We look forward to many years of service from Commissioner LeVine! HC

More Events!

May Is Historic Preservation And Archaeology Awareness (HPAA) Month

Museums! Museums! Museums! For HPAA 2012 some of our local museums will be offering free passes and other programming for May. For more information, please visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/hp after April 16, 2012.

Historic Preservation Commission Annual Awards For Excellence And HPAA Month Proclamation

May 16, 2012
9 a.m.

Las Vegas City Hall, 495 S. Main Street, Council Chambers

Please join Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman and HPC Chairman Dorothy Wright as they recognize individuals and organizations for excellence in historic preservation. The winners will be announced on our website by May 1, 2012.

Helldorado Days Rodeo

May 18-20, 2012

At the Downtown Rodeo Grounds

Events will include the rodeo, food, carnival and merchandise vendors.

Helldorado Days Parade

May 19, 2012

5-9 p.m.

Downtown: Fourth Street between
Gass and Ogden Avenues

Fireworks will follow parade. HC

Lost-Saved-Threatened

"Editor's note: This section of the newsletter features significant restoration projects, preservation successes and threatened resources but not necessarily one of each in every issue."

by Courtney Mooney, historic preservation officer

Lost: Pop Squires House



400 S. Seventh St.



408 S. Seventh St.

Earlier this year, two of Las Vegas' most historic homes were demolished to make way for a two story office building in the Las Vegas High School Neighborhood Historic District. The homes were located at 400 and 408 S. Seventh St., on the southwest corner of S. Seventh St. and Lewis Avenue.

The home at 400 S. Seventh St. was constructed in 1937 in a traditional ranch style. The home was relatively intact when demolished. The "Las Vegas High School Neighborhood Survey," completed in 1988 by the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society, states that 400 S. Seventh St. was once owned by Dr. John R. McDaniel. Dr. McDaniel was one of the first doctors to join the staff of the Las Vegas Hospital, and served as the public health officer for Boulder City.



The Historic Preservation Commission is an 11-member board made up of community members appointed by the Las Vegas City Council. The board is responsible for hearing and making recommendations regarding the designation of historic landmarks, properties and districts to the city's historic register; overseeing alterations and new construction of designated historic properties and making recommendations to the City Council. Meetings: Fourth Wednesday of each month, 12:15 p.m., Historic Fifth Street School, 401 S. Fourth St., Las Vegas, NV 89101 except in November and December when they are often combined.

Dorothy Wright, chairperson

Bob Stoldal, vice-chairperson

Mary Hausch

Patrick J. Klenk

Robert Bellis

Richard H. Cuppett

James Veltman

Claytee White

Jarmilla McMillan-Arnold

Jack LeVine

Colleen Beck

Donald Hotchkiss, Jr., P.E.

David Millman, ex-officio

For more information about historic preservation efforts, contact:

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In 1941 he became the president-elect of the Nevada State Medical Association.

The home at 408 S. Seventh St. was better known as the "Pop Squires House." It was constructed in 1931 in a Spanish Revival style for prominent businessman and civic leader Robert Griffith at a cost of \$7,500 according to the 1988 survey. Griffith's most notable achievement was the development of Mt. Charleston into a resort area. Griffith also served as postmaster and president of the Chamber of Commerce. He moved to a home in Rancho Circle in the 1940s, selling the home on S. Seventh St. to Charles "Pop" Squires.

Pop Squires first arrived in the Las Vegas valley in February 1905 with the new railroad line being constructed between Los Angeles and Salt Lake City. He and his partners established a lumberyard, a tent hotel, a real estate firm and the First State Bank. In 1906, Squires assisted in the formation of the Consolidated Power & Telephone Company, bringing electricity and phone service to the new town.

In 1908, Squires and his wife purchased the community's only newspaper, the *Las Vegas Age*. Squires was among the Southern Nevada leaders who helped divide Lincoln County, creating Clark County in 1909. As soon as this new county was organized, Squires worked on turning the town of Las Vegas into an incorporated city. With his wife and the voice of their newspaper, the couple became advocates for women's suffrage. Perhaps his greatest contribution was as a member of the League of the Southwest and the Colorado River Commission, which eventually led to the construction of Hoover Dam. Squires lived in the house with his wife, Delphine, until his death in the 1950s.

The developers of the new office building worked with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office and the HPC on language for a bronze plaque to be installed on the front façade to commemorate Pop and Delphine Squires. In addition, they plan to contribute to the digitizing of the *Las Vegas Age* for online accessibility and search capabilities. HC

Upcoming Events:

Nevada Rock Art Foundation Ninth Annual Meeting

May 4-6, 2012

Casablanca Resort, Mesquite, Nevada

The ninth annual meeting includes a summation of the year, lectures, presentations, annual banquet and awards ceremony, field trips and shopping with featured vendors. For more information, visit www.nvrockart.org.

2011 Mayor's Urban Design Awards (MUDA)

Las Vegas Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman awarded four exceptional projects for the 2011 Mayor's Urban Design Awards (MUDA) at the annual State of the City address. Each project fosters the city's commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and livability in one of four categories.



Historic windows were saved by replacing the glass panes and reglazing.

The 2011 MUDA winners are:

- **Building and Environment:** Nevada State Museum, State of Nevada
- **Public Places:** First Street Beautification, City of Las Vegas Department of Public Works
- **Public Art:** Cultural Corridor, Las Vegas Arts Commission and artists
- **Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse:** 1211 S. 16th St., Karen Cornell

The awards were presented at the State of the City address on April 11, 2012 by Mayor Goodman. For more information about the MUDA program, visit www.lasvegasnevada.gov/muda. HC

Kudos

Sali Underwood, former SHPO site stewardship program coordinator, has accepted the position of curator of natural history at the Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas. Samantha Rubinson is the new full time site stewardship coordinator as of February. Please join us in congratulating both in their new positions. HC